COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF

CLINTON HEIGHTS

2020 Board of Deacons Annual Report

January 2021 COVID EDITION

Deacons that served this past year of 2020 are as follows:

Bruce Giddings – Chair Deacon

Anne Wark – Co-Chair Deacon

Carl Kirk – Secretary Deacon

Matthew Beltholdt – Treasurer Deacon

Jessica Martin – Deacon

Vacant - Deacon

Including our Deacon Emeritus: Ethel Center, Irma Landon, and Deanne Bellinger.

How does one report on this past year of 2020, otherwise known as the Covid19 Coronavirus pandemic year? 2020 showed up with much hope, promise and anticipated enthusiasm. Our Lenten theme was Jesus as a Rebel. Our pictures placed in front in the sanctuary showing Jesus in some rebellious actions. Asking the returned children from Sunday school program for thoughts and feedback.

Plans of camp Fowler saw shape happening for registration for spiritual summer fun for youth.

Bowling for Beds with Journey church was in February. The fund-raising effort raised $11,000.00 and Matthew Peckham was lead fund raiser. Then March approached with anticipated plans for Palm Sunday and Easter began to take shape. Orders for palms and Easter Lilies were discussed. Then came Covid. We began the task of changing our worshiping ways. Staying home, remote church services began. Home phones, cell phones, iPads, laptops and PC’s all were the beginning of a new norm for Church. Zoom now was a household word. Gathering masks, gloves and sanitizer was a common carry-on for wherever we went and still go.

The Deacons Committee has been grateful for the combined efforts of our Church Council Committee in arranging health and safety protocols and guidelines so that our parishioners and community remains safe and Covid free. Closing our church was necessary but that wouldn’t stop us. Many changes have taken place, but we have had the ability to continue our mission of faith and spiritual growth. Closing our doors seemed to open our many giving hearts this past year. And as we continued to give, assist and offer our tithes of appreciation, some gave more. We have also lost time spent with loved ones during this harsh shut-down. We also had to say our final good-byes to dear loved ones also. From afar, online, or some not being able at all to pay our respects. These challenges continue to task us with patience and hope.

So now we may see a ray of hope. Brought on by prayer, faith, or maybe persistence. Maybe all, and by all with the love of Christ and each other within us all, we continue to press on.

This past year has certainly tested everyone’s patience, self-reliance, personal sanity and possibly even our inner faith. The largest challenge during this pandemic would be not having/attending in-person worship within the homey and quaint warmth of our Church sanctuary. However, we have made electronic/virtual strides to keep us all connected and communicated with. Zoom and phone call ins have both made it possible to connect with everyone, and still be safe.

The Deacons have continued their funded mission commitments for 2020 to the following:

National Alliance on Mental Health, Saint Joseph’s House, Labor Religion Coalition, Interfaith Partnership, and Camp Fowler.

Deacons continued with donations such as Turkeys, pies, and other fixings for CoNSERN U Thanksgiving Day Food Pantry, and Hands on Food for Faith. And we continue to Thank all who have donated. This past Christmas effort of dropped-off gift donations continued for CoNSERN U. In addition, thru the assistance of UCC in directing appropriated funds, our church also helps our sponsored young Palestinian girl Halima. We are committed to an annual donation of $300 ($25/month) to assist Halima with necessary financial needs.

This past year has prevented our other activities such as joining Journey Church, and joint efforts with Cornerstone Campus Ministries, Outdoor services and other gathered faith-based activities which unfortunately require close social distancing. However, we remain focused with anticipation to plan for these mention activities for upcoming year with safety and health in the forefront.

This past year has given us challenges and given us opportunity for new solutions. One of the larger solutions for our decided Shut-Down was the implementation of on-line services. Thru the power of ZOOM services (Phone-in service too) we have been able to continually connect virtually with our congregation every week. Thanks to the hard-dedicated services of our Pastor Barbara Toll. Others that have made our virtual Church experience spiritually rewarding are, Music Director Garett and Max with hymnals and other music selections. And our very own special guest Rachel Peckham this past Christmas Eve service. A very heartfelt Thank you to them all for their help in our past Holiday Services. The efforts of many have made our almost near normal church experience acceptable.

All these restrictive changes have given us newfound appreciations, and new respect for what we miss and what we’ve lost. We as Deacons wish to thank the entire Congregation for its Patience, and continued generosity that allows us to continue the work we do for Church and Community. Peace and God Bless.

GOD BLESS, The Deacons